Minutes of Special Meeting
February 5, 2026

Members of the Governing Board Present: Mayor Pam Snypes, Mayor Protem Iretha Hancock, Alderman Melvin Lytle, Alderman Erin Adams, Alderman Jamie Grindstaff and Alderman Wayne Stafford.

Visitors: See attached sign-in sheet

Mayor Pam Snypes opened the meeting.

Prayer: Led by Alderman Wayne Stafford

Pledge: Led by Alderman Jamie Grindstaff

Public Comments:

Case Neal with Destination By Design gave a brief presentation of the background on the Street Scape design on Catawba Avenue. The (8) trees in the original plan only included a 3 X 5 support base. Mr. Neal presented some ways of how to move the money in the grant to help with the cost of the larger tree cells support system of which the cost is about $143,580. There were about 3 alternate costs in the project-Pavement support-$143,580, Sign Posts-$17,600 and Furnishings-$65,445. These funds have to come from the Contingency.

Amy Davis had a question if some of the town's other grant money can be used for this project. The other grant ($10 million for water & $5 million for sewer) can only be used for projects for water and sewer infrastructure. Mayor Snypes explained that this grant will be used on different projects throughout the town.

Jeremy Poore asked the Board if any study was done on the trees as they grow creating problems in the sidewalk and utility lines that are under the road. There were (3) Arborists present to give their knowledge on the trees and their roots.

Daniel Brackett with TNNC Construction explained the reasons why the project came to a halt a few weeks ago. The snow and icy weather was one factor, the slope of the street was miscalculated and had to be recalculated and one drain box at the Commerce St intersection.

Jeremy Poore presented a petition of community support in favor of the trees. The petition will be added and recorded with the minutes.

Shannon Odom with TDA spoke on the financial support the TDA has put into this street scape project in the amount of $250,000. Mr. Odom feels that since the TDA has contributed this money, they should have some say and input on any changes to the project.

John Odell is a certified Arborist, and he spoke on why he feels the trees are a vital cause for the street scape project. He stated he doesn't get the impression the Town is eliminating the trees out of the project but rather a concern on the support system for the trees for the longevity of the trees and sidewalks.

Mayor Snypes read some prior minutes from board meetings on which the street scape was discussed on any changes or costs. A copy of these prior board meeting minutes is attached.

Alderman Iretha Hancock spoke to Ann, business owner across the street from Town Hall, about her organizing a volunteer group to take care of the trees and greenery maintenance within the street scape. Ann had expressed in the Progress Construction meeting at Town Hall last Thursday afternoon that she was willing to form a volunteer group to maintain and upkeep the trees. After a brief discussion, several who attended the meeting are willing to be a part of the volunteer group and wish to come to the regular February board meeting on the 16th and talk about how they would like to have a beautification group in Old Fort.

Alderman Melvin Lytle made the motion to move forward with the plans for the (8) trees with the larger box support system and for the volunteer group to maintain and upkeep the trees. The motion was seconded by Alderman Erin Adams and approved 5 – 0 vote.

Alderman Wayne Stafford made the motion to approve the Resolution for Application for North Carolina Department of Commerce Small Business Infrastructure Grant Program (SmBIZ) Rural Engagement & Investment Program Town of Old Fort Streetscape & Infrastructure Improvements. The motion was seconded by Alderman Jamie Grindstaff and approved 5 – 0 vote.

Alderman Iretha Hancock made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Alderman Erin Adams and approved 5 – 0 vote.

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Mayor, Town of Old Fort

Attest:

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Renee' Taylor, Town Administrator